

# FireFighter

The magazine of the Fire Brigades Union ♦♦♦ [www.fbu.org.uk](http://www.fbu.org.uk)

April 2011



## DAYLIGHT ROBBERY

Hands off our pensions **See p10**





# Matt Wrack

## Taking our campaign forward after 26 March

Like many other unions, the FBU put a great deal of effort into building our campaign for the demonstration on 26 March. As part of our work I have attended and spoken at meetings in approximately half of our regions. I hope that meetings will be set up elsewhere very soon.

At these meetings, which have been open to all local members, we have outlined the various challenges we face as the Westminster coalition government attempts to force through its austerity programme. As you will be aware, this includes cuts at local level, attacks on our pay and, most urgently, the attack on pensions.

### Fire station meetings

What is clear to me from these meetings is that our members are increasingly well informed about the cuts agenda and its implications for our service. While nobody wants to see conflict in the fire and rescue service, there is huge anger at the proposals currently being discussed as a result of government announcements and arising from the Hutton review of public sector pensions.

This anger is a result of three things. Firstly, FBU members increasingly understand that the proposals (for example on retirement age) have nothing to do with the real needs of the fire and rescue service. Secondly, we know

that they are not based on the real costs of pensions, which were supposedly addressed in 2006. Thirdly, FBU members are furious that a government can effectively renege on the pensions deal firefighters signed up to.

### What next?

There are three tasks which need to be taken up in every single brigade in order to take our campaign on. Firstly, we need to ensure that we are systematically lobbying politicians in every area. This may seem like

a lost cause in some cases – but it does have an impact. We've seen this in parliament, when MPs have asked questions and put down motions after contact with our members and officials. It is important to note that local firefighters visiting their MP (or other local politician) can often have a greater impact than the same approach from a union official.

Secondly, we need to ensure that every member is fully involved in the debate around these issues. The union has already circulated a model resolution on the attacks we face and the campaign against them – including the possible need for industrial action. It is important that this is discussed and voted on in every branch. Details of the results should be provided to brigade officials so that we can build a national picture of the concerns members have.

### Take part – get involved

Finally, I would urge FBU members to get involved in some of the wider campaigning which is going on. It is not just as fire and rescue service employees that we are being hit. We are also seeing other services cut, our taxes increased and the future for youngsters looking increasingly bleak. In every town and city there are new anti-cuts campaigns emerging. I would encourage local FBU members to get involved.

Together we are stronger. Together we can make a difference.



*FBU members lobby parliament: A visit from local firefighters can often have a greater impact on an MP or other local politician than the same approach from a union official*

**“We need to ensure that every member is fully involved in the debate around these cuts, jobs and pensions”**



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*Night cover saves lives*

COVER MONTAGE: STEFANO CAGNONI  
TOBY MELVILLE/REUTERS

## LETTERS

### FBU organiser of the year: appeal for nominations

This year the Fire Brigades Union will be presenting an award at Annual Conference to an individual FBU member/official who has shown an exceptional commitment to the recruitment and organising of FBU members during the period of 2010/2011.

This could be somebody who:

- has gone the extra mile to increase union membership in their branch or brigade
- has taken the initiative to help with an organising task such as mapping
- has made a commitment to get other members involved in one of our campaigns
- has organised members locally to challenge a burning issue such as health and safety or an equalities problem.

It is important that these activists are recognised for their efforts. The Outstanding Contribution to Organising award 2010/2011 is sponsored by UIA Home Insurance and will be the first of its kind within the union. It is designed to properly recognise the extraordinary day-to-day contributions made by members, reps and activists to strengthen the FBU.

Along with the award, UIA have also kindly donated a prize of £500 for the winner. This is an award which is aimed at all levels of the union. Members are invited to nominate colleagues who they feel have gone the extra mile for the FBU in 2010/2011.

Nominations, including details of the reason the individual has been proposed, should be sent via email to [daniel.giblin@fbu.org.uk](mailto:daniel.giblin@fbu.org.uk) by 5pm on 30 April 2011.

A shortlist will be drawn up from the nominations and the winner will be selected and presented with their award at Annual Conference 2011.

I would encourage everybody to contribute and consider nominating someone from your station/brigade.

**Daniel Giblin**  
FBU national organiser



## A great victory for us all

**FBU general secretary Matt Wrack explains how the union successfully fought on to the end for one member**

One of the longest running miscarriages of justice in fire service history has been resolved. Fire Brigades Union member Steve Godward has finally won full reinstatement, back pay and full pension rights from the West Midlands fire service.

Steve was suspended from duty on 13 November 2002 following allegations relating to the strike which was due to start that evening as part of the union's pay campaign. In December 2002 Steve was dismissed following a disciplinary hearing and an appeal to the fire authority was unsuccessful. But his case had been heard

under the 1985 discipline regulations (abolished in 2004) and these allowed a further appeal to the secretary of state.

Steve's was the last appeal heard under the old regulations. The junior minister considering the case upheld Steve's appeal in 2004 and ordered reinstatement.

Disgracefully, rather than accepting

the decision, the West Midlands fire service sought a judicial review of the appeal decision. It also refused to reinstate Steve as was required under the processes outlined in the discipline regulations.

This process resulted in a further delay and an agreement by the government's Treasury Solicitor to reconsider the appeal.

When this further appeal was considered, Steve was again successful as fire minister Jim Fitzpatrick again ordered reinstatement.

Once again, West Midlands fire service refused to comply despite numerous attempts to negotiate with them by FBU officials.

It is therefore a huge relief to Steve and his family that the employer has finally agreed that employment has indeed been

**Those who flouted disciplinary rules established under statute have brought shame on themselves**

continuous since 2002. Full back pay and pension rights have been restored and he is now able to move on with his life.

This is a remarkable result after such a long and difficult political and legal campaign.

Throughout this period the FBU has represented and supported Steve Godward on the basis that the union always believed he had been victimised as a result of his trade union activities.

I am sure all FBU members will now join me in wishing Steve and his family best wishes for the future.

Those in the upper echelons of the West Midlands fire service, who deliberately flouted recognised procedures and disciplinary rules established under statute, have brought shame on themselves and have undermined any belief in "fair treatment" in the fire and rescue service. They have wasted tens of thousands of pounds of public money on useless and ill-considered legal processes and they have clearly and deliberately victimised an employee for more than eight years.

At the end of it all, they have completely failed. This is a victory for Steve Godward, for the FBU and for justice.



Kevin  
Herniman:  
Workers do  
not go to work  
to die



# FBU rallies defenders of the fire service

## LGA fire conference

The FBU has appealed to the fire and rescue community to defend the service against devastating government cuts. FBU general secretary Matt Wrack told the LGA fire conference last month not to throw away the proud service generations have built.

"The UK fire service has a worldwide reputation," he said. "This is because of the standards we have set in the past. I hope that this generation of chief officers, this generation of fire authority members, is not the generation which sees that reputation thrown away."

"The FBU has argued that these matters can start to be addressed by developing professional standards across a range of issues including operational guidance, training, recruitment and development, and equipment. Developing accepted



**Matt Wrack at the LGA conference:**  
*Staff are the key to quality*

professional standards would allow local communities to measure the performance of their fire and rescue service against the best professional standards."

Matt Wrack argued that firefighters, above all, are the key to a decent public service. He said: "If we are to improve, let's remember that the people who will deliver this on the frontline are our firefighters."

"Staff are key to the quality of the service. You cannot protect and improve a public service while endlessly attacking those who work within it on their pay, their jobs, their conditions of service and their pensions."

# Restructuring consultation 'offers a real opportunity'

## Scotland

The Fire Brigades Union believes the Scottish government's consultation on the future of the fire and rescue service offers a once in a lifetime opportunity to improve many aspects of the service.

Roddy Robertson, FBU executive council member for Scotland, said: "We realise that the environment in which the service operates changes, therefore the service must adapt and evolve."

"If the consultation

contributions generate discussion around this topic then collectively we can enhance the service, making it stronger, better and more effective, while at the same time becoming more socially responsible."

A key element that keeps surfacing is local democratic accountability.

Current arrangements are based on two services reporting directly to unitary authorities and six reporting through joint fire and rescue boards. One service (Strathclyde) represents almost half of

the total service.

The FBU believes that the current arrangements can be improved.

Another issue is the danger of the service becoming a political football in the run-up to Scottish government elections.

Roddy Robertson said: "The SNP, Labour and the Conservatives are all speaking in favour of restructuring and all suggest that a single service would be the best choice. Therefore the union is confident we can build consensus on the way forward."

## SOUNDING OFF

### Remember the dead – fight for the living

South West regional official Kevin Herniman explains why firefighters should mark Workers' Memorial Day on 28 April

Every year 28 April is Workers' Memorial Day. It is an opportunity to highlight the preventable nature of most workplace accidents and ill health and to promote campaigns to ensure workers can go home after they finish their shift. Workers do not go to work to die. Workers' Memorial Day is a platform for unions to organise and fight for improvements in safety at their workplaces.

In a world where death, injury, and illness at work are hidden away and taken for granted, 28 April is used to highlight the dangers to workers.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), across the world:

- each year, more than two million women and men die as a result of work-related accidents and diseases
- workers suffer approximately 270 million occupational accidents each year and fall victim to some 160 million incidents of work-related illnesses
- hazardous substances kill 440,000 workers annually and asbestos claims 100,000 lives
- a worker dies every 15 seconds worldwide, 6,000 workers die every day and more people die whilst at work than those fighting wars.

Workers' Memorial Day is now an international day of remembrance for workers killed at work or by diseases caused by work. Workplace and public events are held throughout the world. Examples include speeches, multi-faith religious services, wreath laying, tree planting, unveiling of monuments and laying out empty shoes to symbolise those who have died at work.

More firefighters have been lost in the last ten years than for decades. So it is vital that fire and rescue services do not make cuts that affect the ability of firefighters to perform their jobs as safely as possible.

# Victory for sprinkler campaign



## Wales

Sprinklers will be installed in all new homes built in Wales, after a campaign backed by the Fire Brigades Union.

The fire safety measure became law following unanimous support from Welsh Assembly Members on 16 February. The new law, introduced by backbencher Ann Jones, who is a former FBU control chair, compels house builders to fit automatic sprinklers in new homes built in Wales.

Ann Jones said that this represented “a huge shift in public safety as Wales became the first country in the world to legislate in this area”.

Previously there was no requirement under building regulations to provide sprinkler systems in new residential premises.

Across Wales, an average of 20 people lose their lives to fire each year and about 80% of fire related deaths and injuries occur in the home.

# Understanding and challenging risk management plans

National women's committee member Jo Byrne tells *Firefighter* about a successful FBU school on integrated risk management planning (IRMP)

## Education

“I was fortunate enough to be accepted onto a course earlier this year and joined about 20 other FBU colleagues – mostly brigade officials – at Wortley Hall for three days of hard work.

The course was facilitated on the whole by Dave Sibert, the FBU IRMP and fire safety advisor, in conjunction with Trevor Cave and TUC tutors.

I was initially quite apprehensive about the course. IRMP is a very dry subject, but the course structure was such that we had plenty of group discussion work as well as tutor-led sessions.

The course was set out in a very logical manner and each session led on extremely well from the last. By day three we all had a much greater understanding of the concept of IRMP and how best we could challenge the process both legally and effectively.

JANINA STRUK



*Jo Byrne: 'I left the course feeling much more confident'*

I left the course feeling much more confident that, as a member of my brigade committee, I can go back to the other officials and provide support during the coming months and years of risk reduction proposals. I would definitely recommend the course to any official who is battling with their brigade management teams to stop the introduction of unfair IRMPs, which are more about saving money than reducing or managing risk.

## IN BRIEF

### Secret control plans revealed

● A secret document outlining the costs involved with the permanent closure of the Isle of Wight's control room has been leaked to the FBU. If approved it would see IOW council taxpayers subsidising Surrey residents, while receiving a lesser service.

Andrew Cooper, FBU IOW control rep, said: “The lack of foresight, depth and clarity in this report is astounding.

“It's riddled with inaccuracies and assumptions that make it unsafe to base such a vital decision on.

“The report only considers the option to outsource to Surrey and has failed to adequately explain why other local solutions have not been researched, costed and presented as an alternative.”

### FBU supports CO alarms in NI

● The FBU has welcomed moves in Northern Ireland to amend building regulations to make carbon monoxide alarms mandatory.

The proposal, part of a wider consultation process on amendments to the building regulations, would require the provision of carbon monoxide alarms in all dwellings within which a combustion appliance, such as a boiler or solid fuel stove, is to be installed or replaced.

The decision follows incidents in Northern Ireland over the last year where there have been fatalities due to faulty boiler installations. One of the incidents involved students, where two died. One of those was a NIFRS cadet.

### 90% reject Surrey public safety plan

● Over 90% of responses to an FBU survey reject public safety proposals by Surrey county council that would lead to slower attendance times and increased risk of death and injury.

Richard Jones, Surrey FBU secretary, said: “The results of the survey clearly indicate that the council leaders and service managers have got it wrong.

“We continue to be available to discuss issues relating to the quality and diversity of services our members provide in the community. However, the proposals in the public safety plan are totally unacceptable and the most appropriate way forward would be to start the process without the financial impositions and focus on community needs.”

# Night cover saves lives



Figures obtained by the FBU underline the importance of fire cover throughout the night

The Fire Brigades Union can reveal new figures which show that the risk of injury or death at night is more than double the risk during the day.

The union is urging government ministers and fire authorities to stop trying to cut cover at night as part of their penny-pinching.

Statistics obtained by the FBU from the department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) indicate that house fires at night are more than twice as likely to result in injury or death than during the day.

Our chart shows the casualty rate of dwelling fires per hour, where casualties include fatalities, serious and slight injuries as well as first aid and precautionary checks.

The figures were kindly provided from the electronic incident reporting system for 2009/10 and have not been published elsewhere.

Although six-hour blocks are published annually in CLG's *Fire Statistics*, this is the first time they have been available on an hourly basis.

The chart shows clearly that the rate of casualties (yellow line) is higher at night – with a peak reported at around 4.00am with a casualty rate 265 per 1,000.

Most casualties in dwelling fires (green line) occurred between the early evening

**This is the time when the public is most at risk. It is the time when firefighters are needed to effect rescues and prevent further calamity.**

and midnight – with over 300 every hour from 17.00 until 23.59. However this period also sees the highest number of dwelling fire incidents (blue line).

The casualty rate is calculated by dividing total casualties by the number of incidents and then multiplying by 1,000. The highest casualty rates are clustered between 23.00 and 09.00.

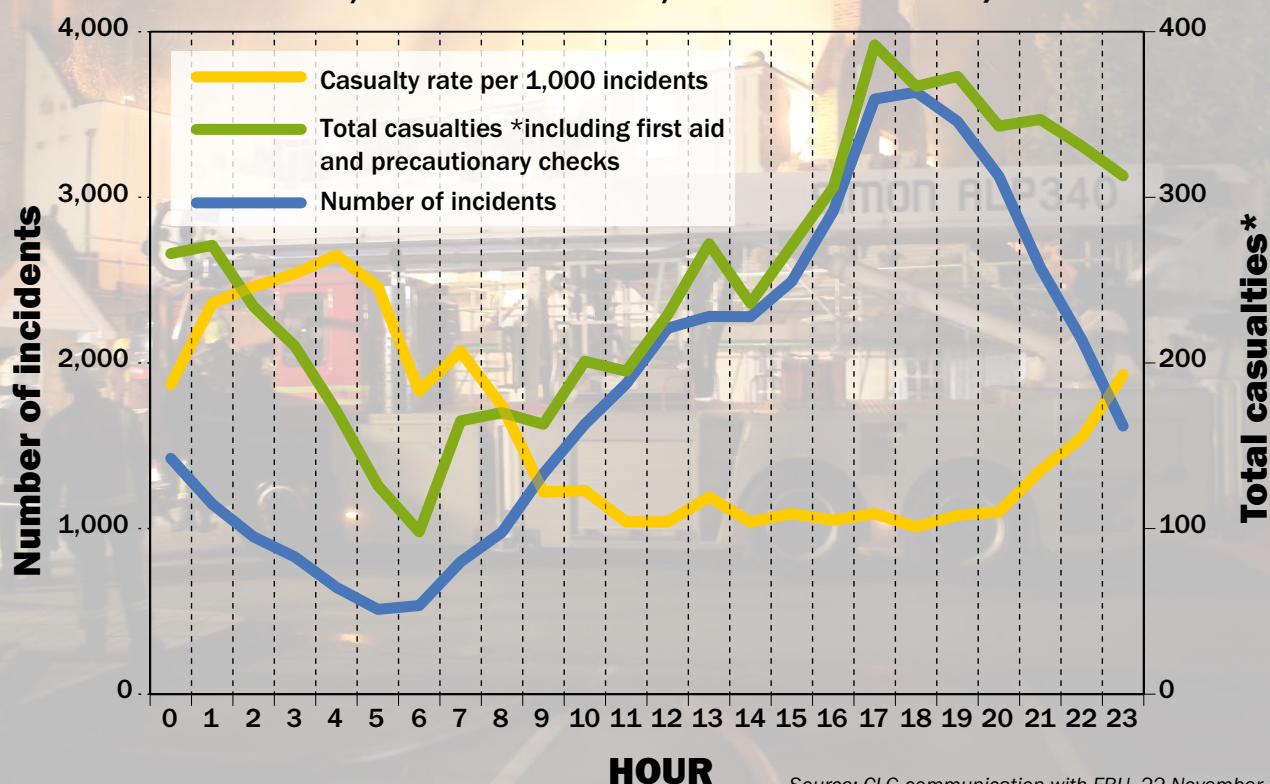
CLG acknowledges that the higher casualty rates during the night probably reflect the lack of awareness of the casualties when the fire starts.

The times recorded are those when the fire was first reported to the fire and rescue service. Therefore many early morning fires may have started earlier in the night.

There can be no mistaking the importance of night cover. This is the time when the public is most at risk. It is the time when firefighters are needed to effect rescues and prevent further calamity. The FBU will continue to stand up for night cover.

PICTURE: IAN MARLOW

**HOURLY CASUALTIES FROM DWELLING FIRES PER 1,000 INCIDENTS, ENGLAND 2009/10**



Source: CLG communication with FBU, 22 November 2010





# Firefighters praised for quake rescues

**F**irefighters have been praised for their rescue efforts after a 6.3 magnitude earthquake hit Christchurch, New Zealand's second city, on 22 February. Authorities estimate that nearly 200 people were killed and hundreds more injured.

Michael Balmer, secretary of the

Christchurch local branch of the New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union (NZPFU) wrote to members: "I wish to pass onto all our members our sincerest thoughts and good wishes. This has and will continue to be an incredibly demanding experience for each and every one of us. There was never any doubt that

you would perform your duties with the utmost professionalism. However on top of this, you have carried yourself with such dignity and with a courage that others outside of the firefighting fraternity will never understand, I applaud each and every one of you."

Seventy members of the UK Urban





# VIEW

FROM THE  
AERIAL LADDER  
PLATFORM

*Fire and rescue workers clear remains from the Canterbury television building in Christchurch where scores of people died*

Search and Rescue (USAR) team flew to Christchurch to assist. They returned after two weeks and were thanked for their “huge contribution” to the rescue and recovery effort and for responding so quickly.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack sent a message of solidarity to the NZPFU when the earthquake struck. He wrote:

“On behalf of FBU firefighters from across the UK please accept our sympathy and support following the terrible earthquake in Christchurch. I know that your members will be doing everything they can to save life and to make communities as safe as possible.”

The NZPFU has pointed out the operations were so effective because

they had firefighter numbers available to intervene. The union resisted efforts in the 1990s to cut costs and reduce firefighter jobs, when fire chiefs argued that the fire service should only be concerned with fire. By fighting for the fire service’s rescue role, they had the personnel to intervene when disasters have struck.



# THE GREAT PENSIONS ROBBERY

**The government's  
plans for firefighters'  
pensions are unfair,  
unsustainable and  
unaffordable**





The Fire Brigades Union has branded government plans for firefighters' pensions "blatant daylight robbery" – unfair, unsustainable and unaffordable for firefighters.

The public service pensions commission report, written by former Labour minister Lord Hutton and published on 10 March, argued that firefighters and other public sector workers should be moved to new pension schemes forcing us to work longer and get less than promised when we retire if career average schemes are imposed. The union insists the government should not implement the report's recommendations.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said: "This is the great pensions robbery and is completely unacceptable to firefighters across the UK.

"Expecting firefighters to work until they are 60 is wrong. Firefighting is a physically arduous job. Peak fitness is essential where seconds can cost lives. The public will not want an ageing frontline fire and rescue service.

"These proposals are unacceptable. The Fire Brigades Union has a warning for the chancellor: Reject Hutton's pension proposals or you'll be playing with fire. Firefighters simply won't accept them."

### Raising retirement ages

Hutton recommended raising the retirement age of public sector workers, including those in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), in line with state pension age. The only exception would be the uniformed services where it would be raised to 60.

Although the New Firefighters Pension Scheme (NFPS) already has a retirement age of 60, compared with 55 in the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS),

the FBU has argued that there is no evidence that firefighters can continue to work this long in the numbers that will be required to maintain the effective service.

Any suggestion of extending the retirement age past 60 is ludicrous as an aged fire service is not in the best interest of the public. Firefighters pay extra for the right to retire early: the contribution rates in the FPS and the NFPS reflect members' ability to retire earlier than the usual age of 65 in the private sector and elsewhere in the public sector.

The argument that firefighters who are no longer able to crew frontline appliances can do other non-operational roles until they retire age 60+ does not hold water.

In reality non-operational roles have already been converted to Green Book roles on a lower salary in most cases. Fire authorities have tried to trim operational establishment figures by converting firefighter roles in this way, thereby saving money.

The knock-on effect is that there are no real redeployment opportunities for operational firefighters who are no longer able to ride frontline appliances.

Sean Starbuck, FBU national officer responsible for pensions, said: "The FBU is very disappointed that Hutton either ignored the concerns raised about raising retirement ages or totally misunderstood the situation.

"He justifies raising retirement ages because of longevity after people retire, but misses the point that in the fire service our members have to maintain operational fitness and there is nothing to suggest that they can extend this to cover a rise in retirement age.

"It is going to cause a situation whereby more FBU members will have to rely upon

an ill-health retirement, which totally defeats the objective."

### The 'career average' threat

Hutton's other main proposal, which threatens firefighters' pensions, is to introduce career average instead of final salary schemes for future service. Career average schemes provide a pension based on the average pay throughout a worker's career. The LGPS, FPS and NFPS provide pensions based on final pay in the last years of service.

A typical career average scheme differs from a final salary scheme in substantial ways. First, each year's block of pension has to be uprated. Depending on the uprating figure used, career average schemes can fall behind earnings and inflation. Although Hutton said they should be linked to the higher figure of earnings, there is no guarantee the government will accept the proposal.

Second, the effect of career average schemes is even more dramatic for members who are promoted. Individuals who gain promotion and therefore earn more salary, especially towards the end of their career, will be hit even harder by a career average scheme, compared with a final salary scheme.

The Fire Brigades Union asked independent pensions experts First Actuarial to assess the impact of a career average scheme. On uprating alone, a career average scheme would cost firefighters between £500 and £1,800 a year on their pensions. Anyone in an officer role would face even higher losses. In a job like firefighting, where progression and promotion, together with increased professionalism and training, are central to our careers, an end to final salary schemes would represent a savage cut to deferred pay and future living standards.

*Lord Hutton: Ignored concerns on retirement age and misunderstood the situation*



### As we were saying ...

"The [government] would not move on the NFPS retirement age of 60. This was despite clear warnings from the FBU and employers that this will lead to a spate of ill-health and injury pensions as older firefighters succumb to the physical demands of the job."

**Firefighter, March 2006**

### Increased contributions

Hutton's report "took for granted" the government's view that all public sector workers should expect to pay higher contributions. In October last year, as part of the comprehensive spending review which cut central government funding to the fire and rescue service, the government said it planned for all public sector workers to pay 3% additional contributions. The chancellor plans to start the phased increase in pension contributions from April 2012. The plans have already been raised at the Firefighters' Pension Committee.

For firefighters, an additional 3% would be at least an extra £800 a year – and almost double that figure for officers in more senior roles.

Many firefighters already pay the highest contributions for their pensions compared to other public sector workers and more than most private sector pension scheme members. Members of the FPS currently pay up to 11% of salary, which equates to at least £250 per month for a competent firefighter. The LGPS and NFPS also have high contributions compared with other workers in the public and private sectors and a 3% increase would make them much more expensive to members than the average private sector scheme. The Hutton review figures show that the average private sector contribution for open defined-benefit schemes was 5.4%.

### Inflation uprating

Hutton also took for granted a further attack on pensions which was agreed by parliament last month. The government has changed the measure of inflation

used to uprate pensions from the retail prices index (RPI) to the consumer prices index (CPI). The decision, which came into force at the beginning of April this year, applies not only to public sector pensions, but also to state pensions and some private pensions.

The government said that the CPI is a more appropriate measurement of the inflation that affects pensioners, because it excludes housing costs. But many pensioners still have housing costs to pay. We know that the government sees the proposal as a way of saving money. If the plan does save money, it is pensioners who will be paying, now and in the future.

Over the past ten years, on average CPI has been 0.75% lower than RPI. At times the difference has been even greater. Although we do not know how price indices will change in the future, a similar difference over the coming decades would cost firefighters thousands of pounds.

This change affects the pensions that everyone has built up to date. Pension scheme members were promised a pension that would increase in line with the RPI and not the lower CPI. If the pension you have already earned is linked to the CPI, then that represents a cut in the pension you have already earned.

### What we are doing about it

The FBU is exploring every political, industrial and legal avenue to oppose the great pensions robbery. The union has already met the fire minister Bob Neill to express in the strongest possible terms our opposition to these proposals. We are liaising with pensioners campaigns and other organisations.

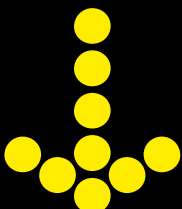
MPs in the FBU's parliamentary group have made countless speeches to complain



WWW.MAUREENMCLEAN.CO.UK

## HOW FIREFIGHTERS COULD LOSE OUT

A **CAREER AVERAGE SCHEME** could cost firefighters between £500 and £1,800 a year from their pensions – and much more after promotion



### RETIRED MEMBER

Retired in 1991, reduction in pension by 2010 if CPI had been used

	Difference
Firefighter	£1,754 pa
Crew Manager	£1,872 pa
Station Manager	£1,989 pa
Group Manager	£2,307 pa
Area Manager	£2,465 pa





*Firefighters and other public sector workers rallied against the switch to CPI on 1 March 2011*

and harry the government over the issue. Katy Clark MP told parliament on 17 February: "I have always taken the view – the trade union view – that pensions are deferred pay. It is very important that people have certainty in arrangements for their retirement ... [People] who will be affected by these changes will be very angry when they realise the impact that the changes will have on them."

FBU officials have met with other trade unions representing over five million public sector workers affected by these changes with a view to coordinating action. The FBU has also asked its solicitors to explore the possibility of legal action to defend members' pensions.

At present the union is ruling nothing out. The FBU wants members to understand the scale of the attack on our pensions that we face. Officials are organising a series of members' meetings in brigades and regions where the issue of pensions and other challenges are being addressed. Please ensure that you attend your local meetings.

## LGPS

Members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) would lose out heavily from the government's pension plans. If contributions were to rise by 3%, this would mean a control member who has just started in the job paying an extra £1,000 a year by 2020 and £1,500 a year by 2030. When they retire, their pensions would be reduced by similar amounts due to uprating by the consumer price index (CPI) and by a career average scheme – a triple pensions whammy.

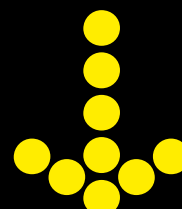
## JUST RETIRED

Retired in 2010, minimum reduction in pension by 2030 under CPI

	Difference
Firefighter	£3,120 pa
Crew Manager	£3,460 pa
Station Manager	£3,869 pa
Group Manager	£4,439 pa
Area Manager	£5,138 pa

## LUMP SUM

The FBU asked First Actuarial to calculate the likely effects of the switch to CPI on the commutation lump sum payment. They found that it will cost 8-10% – or **between £7,000 and £10,000 less overall.**



# Floods are linked to climate change

**FBU demands the resources to tackle growing threat**

**C**limate change meant that the floods that devastated England and Wales in the autumn of 2000 were between two and three times more likely to happen than if greenhouse gas emissions had not happened, according to research published in the science journal *Nature*.

This is the first time scientists have been able to measure the role of climate change in increasing the risk of serious floods. The Fire Brigades Union believes the research has significant implications for the fire and rescue service.

Myles Allen of Oxford University led the research. He said: "It shows climate change is acting here and now to load the dice towards more extreme weather."

## **2000 floods**

Between September and November 2000, more than 50cm (20 inches) of rain fell in the UK – the wettest autumn since records began in 1766. More than 10,000 homes were flooded and £3.5bn of insurance claims were made. Until now scientists could state that global warming was expected to cause more extreme weather, but not that it was to blame for any specific event. Now we can go further.

Bob Watson, chief scientific adviser to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), said: "This is ground-breaking work.



**Firefighters rescue a woman from her old people's home which was flooded when the River Ouse burst its banks in Lewes, Sussex in October 2000**

REUTERS





## Lessons from Cornwall 2010

Firefighters in Cornwall responded to major flooding again in November 2010. FBU officials in Cornwall reported problems in the absence of a statutory duty:

- There was a lack of coordinated command and control at silver/gold level. It was felt that if a statutory duty for fire services to respond then this would improve.
- There was a lack of equipment/PPE for all staff required to deal with the floods. There were only two dry suits per appliance so

personnel were wading through water in fire kit. And the dry suits are not personal issue, so may be too big or small. This also applies to technicians.

- There was a lack of resources. Cornwall has only two specialist appliances to deal with water rescue. The incident was spread over three separate areas, so this was not enough. Cornwall is staffed by jump-crewing, so water rescue technicians were being mobilised on the first and second appliances, leaving non-technician-qualified personnel to staff

specialist appliances. Cornwall is looking to acquire two more water rescue appliances, but concerns were raised that it does not have the correct levels of equipment needed, including lighting and stretchers, for instance.

- An HSE inspection report included an action point to provide training to officers to deal with specialist incidents. A number of officers attended a water rescue incident command course as a result. But during the latest flooding incident the officer in charge was not one of these specialist officers.

The research shows human-induced climate change is not an issue for the next decades or century: it is an issue facing us today.”

Even the government accepts the findings. The Met Office is now setting up a service that will use its computers to calculate the role of climate change in exacerbating extreme weather.

The FBU wants this data to be fed into the fire and rescue service, so that the new climate risks from floods, droughts, storms and wildfires are calculated and new resources made available for firefighters to tackle them.

### Statutory duty

The new research strengthens the arguments made by the FBU for a change in the law to make every fire and rescue service legally obliged to respond to floods. At present only Scotland has a statutory duty for flood response.

A statutory duty would help firefighters get the right procedures, equipment and number of firefighters. It would also ensure that rescue operations were co-ordinated and controlled by the organisation best suited to the role.

Many MPs agree with the FBU on this. In December, the House of Commons Environment Committee recommended that all fire and rescue services should have a duty to respond to floods.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack took this message to ministers last month. Drawing on the recent experiences of firefighters all over the UK, he pressed the government to change the law. The reply was that it has not made its mind up. If ministers looked at the science and weighed up the risks, they would press ahead and change the law.

Matt Wrack said: “The government should now change the law accordingly, and give fire and rescue services the resources to respond to floods.

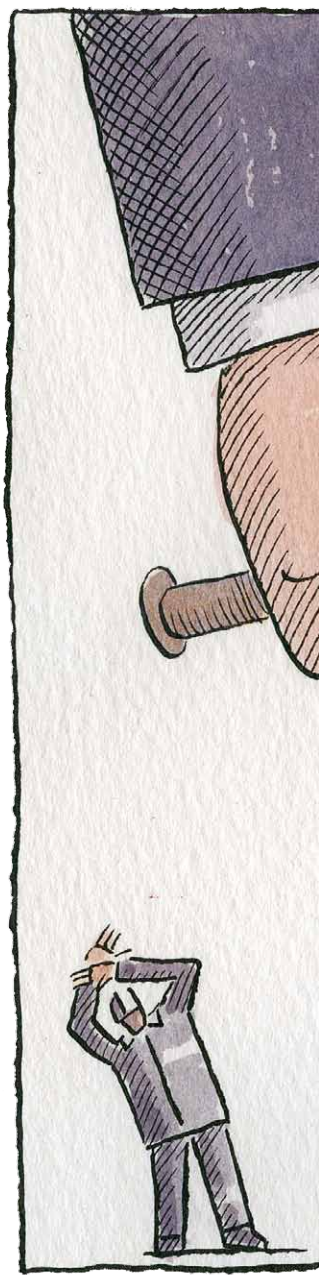
“The Pitt review after the terrible floods in 2007 backed the proposal, but this government and the previous one shied away from it.

“The environment committee makes a clear case for action. The government can’t wait for the next flood disaster – it should act now to change the law to ensure that fire and rescue services have the resources we need to assist all communities.”



**The Tory-led government has announced plans to forcibly privatise almost every public service. The FBU says this would wreck our service**

# Tories announce 'Everything for sale'



**T**he big society is a big con when it comes to public services. Instead of paying firefighters and other public sector workers decent wages to help people in need, the government wants our public services run by asset-strippers who will sell off everything for a profit. What is left will be done on the cheap and by volunteers.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said: "The big society seems simply to mean that the things society used to provide for its citizens, it will no longer provide. It seems to be a euphemism for the Thatcherite view that there is no such thing as society."

The government's promised *Open Public Services* white paper will outline its plans. Prime minister David Cameron wrote in the *Daily Telegraph* (21 February)

explaining what he means by "big society".

He said: "We will create a new presumption – backed up by new rights for public service users and a new system of independent adjudication – that public services should be open to a range of providers competing to offer a better service."

He said that "of course there are some areas – such as national security or the judiciary – where this wouldn't make sense".

He added: "But everywhere else should be open to diversity ... This is a transformation: instead of having to justify why it makes sense to introduce competition in some public services – as we are now doing with schools and in the NHS – the state will have to justify why it should ever operate a monopoly."

He added: "Working from this presumption, we will devolve power even

further. For example, we will give more people the right to take control of the budget for the service they receive.

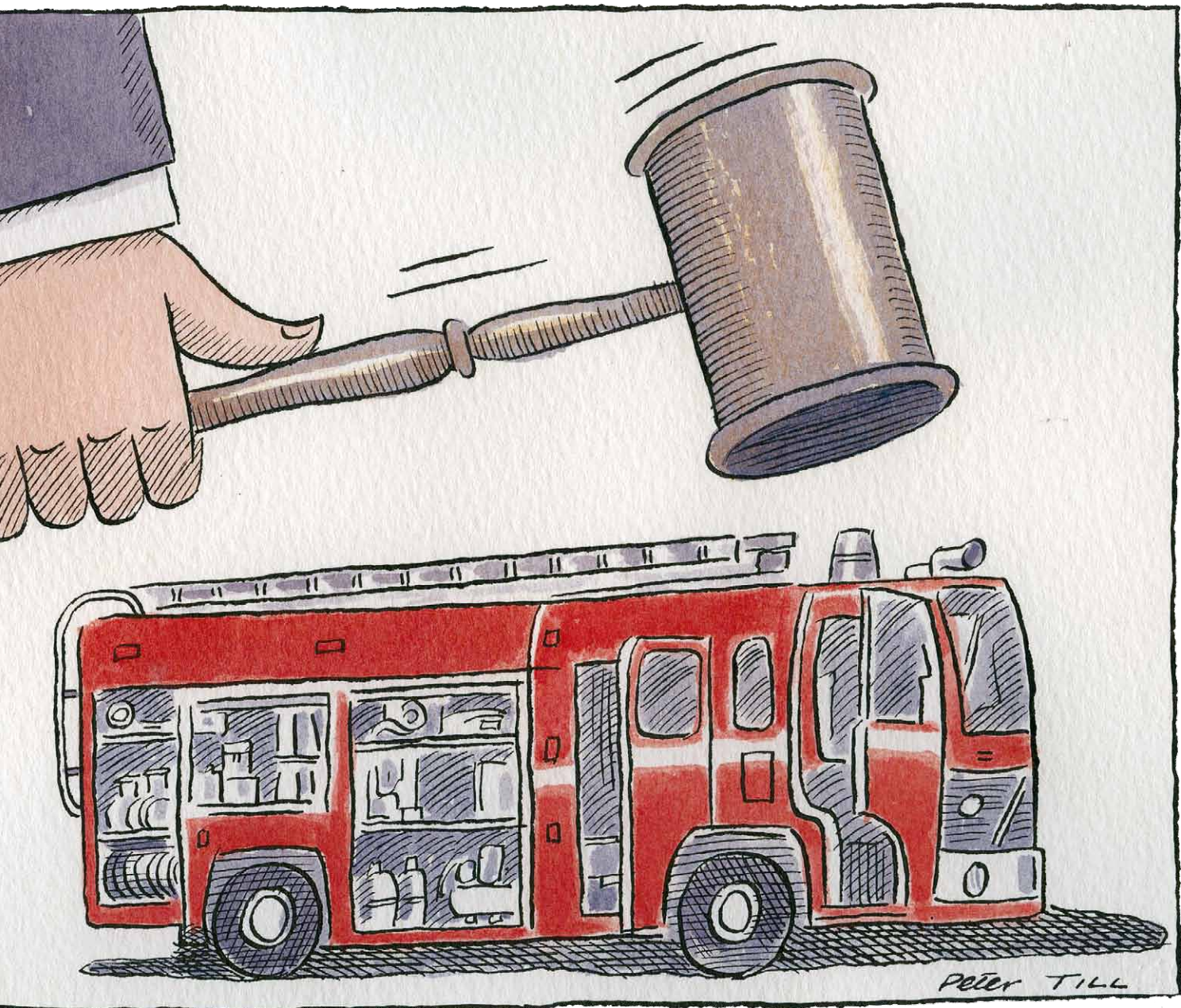
"In this new world of decentralised, open public services it will be up to government to show why a public service cannot be delivered at a lower level than it is currently; to show why things should be centralised, not the other way round."

## Implications for the fire service

The implications for the fire and rescue service are clear. Ministers plan to do to our service what their predecessors did to the railways.

Almost every public service – including the fire and rescue service – would be put out to tender. However much local people support their local fire and rescue service, however well it works, they will have no choice in the matter. Under





the camouflage of localism and choice, a private company can challenge any service it would like to run and bid to take it over.

If a company thinks it can make a profit from cherry-picking anything the council or the government runs, it will have the right to demand it is put out to tender. If the company bids below the current cost and claims that quality will not fall, the service is theirs for the taking.

No elected bodies will be able to refuse. It will be taken out of their hands because of competition law. If local people want their council to hold on to a much-loved service, a company can take the council to court – at huge and wasteful expense – and almost certainly win the right to tender and win the contract.

Once contracts are in place, it would take a titanic struggle to get them back into public ownership.

#### **Asset-strippers**

What could these companies do? They would shut fire stations and then have their friends build new ones at inflated prices.

They would “manage” our fire engines and equipment for a profit. They would dice up our training so that “providers” can come in and make a fortune, with scant regard for our safety.

In the wider context, the privatisers want to do away with the central government grant that subsidises local authority spending, so that richer councils can go it alone (for the fat-cats) and leave the poorest with huge needs with less.

They want a two-tier fire service, where the wealthy will get a service because they can pay for it, while others will get whatever can be scratched out of an ever-smaller pot.

“Customers” of fire services might as well put a sign above their door indicating whether they have paid enough to be rescued.

We already know that fire stations built under PFI are more expensive. We’ve already seen the role of AssetCo in strikebreaking. The government wants this extended to the whole of our service.

Firefighters are proud of our service. The FBU will fight to stop this government from wrecking it. We need firefighters and our allies in the community to understand the scale of the assault we face and then help the union stop it in its tracks.



# Your safety

## Is government trying to kill off safety inspection?



*Hazards* magazine editor Rory O'Neill asks what the future can be for the beleaguered Health and Safety Executive

It's got a shrinking budget and its hands are tied. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has never had it so bad, and is now finalising plans to turn into a slimline pay-per-go enforcement agency, charging for everything from enforcement notices to routine advice and accident investigations.

The 35% cut in government funds for HSE to take full effect by 2015, has necessitated a "voluntary exit scheme" which has been "massively over-subscribed" by hacked off HSE staff.

### Follow the money

One reason for the plummeting morale that is seeing staff rush for the door, is HSE's strategy to replace the £84m it will lose each year from the government. Instead of a rational work plan designed to minimise deaths, injuries and ill-health at work, at least some of HSE's new priorities will follow the money.

One proposal for which it is currently awaiting the final approval of ministers is "fee for fault" charges for enforcement notices. It's already received the nod from HSE's parent

Department for Work and Pensions and is now doing the rounds of other ministries and related committees.

### Enforced changes

It is about to get a lot worse. In a 2 February 2011 letter to Derek Allen, head of local authority regulation, HSE chief executive Geoffrey Podger indicated a new pared-back enforcement regime was being introduced "in the light of the reduction in resources for the spending review period and the coalition government's approach to regulation." He added: "Ministers may seek to make an announcement on this issue around the beginning of March."

Proactive inspections will

be abandoned entirely in most workplaces outside of the nuclear, chemical and offshore sectors. In these remaining sectors, many of which HSE admits still carry a "significant risk", the letter says:

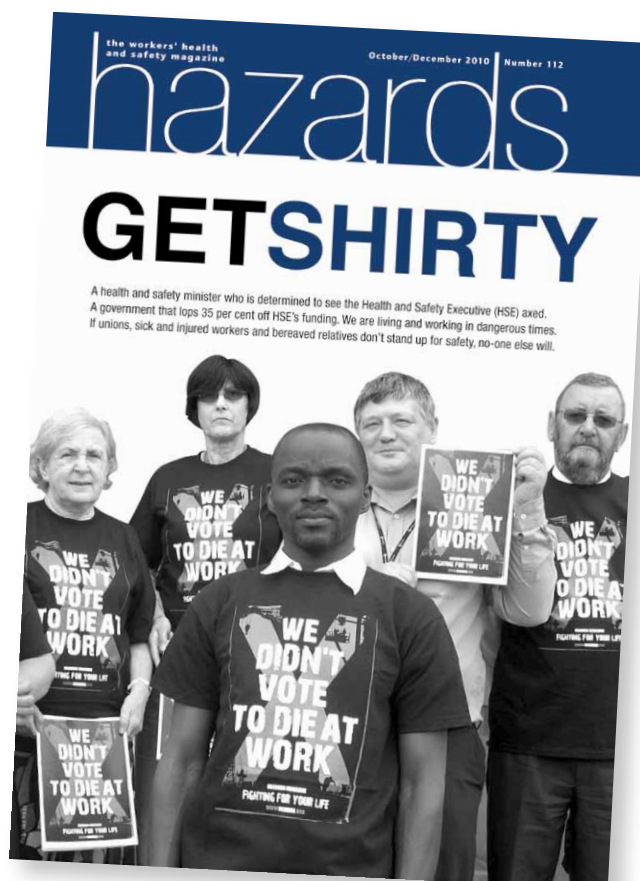
"HSE has identified three categorisations:  
(i) Sectors which present significant risk and where in our judgment proactive inspection remains necessary as part of the overall regulatory approach.  
(ii) Sectors where there remains significant risk but proactive inspection is not considered a necessary or useful component of future interventions.  
(iii) Sectors where, under the new approach, proactive inspection is not justified in terms of cost-effectiveness."

The document adds: "The cessation of proactive inspection in categories (ii) and (iii) ... will "enable the reduction of HSE inspections by one-third from 2011/12 onwards."

Overall, the number of inspections will certainly drop to below 18,500 next year and could fall to about 15,000 a year, down from over 60,000 a decade ago. It is a move that has delighted health and safety minister Chris Grayling. Whitehall insiders have told *Hazards* he has been "crowing" in a memo to mandarins of his success in curtailing health and safety oversight.

The HSE document sent to local authorities boss Derek Allen notes that from April 2012 "cost recovery" will, with ministerial approval, mean HSE would "recover its cost where an intervention of any type (e.g. inspection, investigation of incident or complaint) shows there has been a material breach of the law that warrants remedial action". The letter proposes that local authority health and safety enforcers follow HSE's lead.

The future for HSE looks far from rosy. For the workforce, with the number harmed by work increasing last year, it looks bleaker still.



This is an edited version of an article, Is HSE finished? from *Hazards* magazine, issue 113, January–March 2011. It appears here with permission. Information about *Hazards* magazine: PO Box 4042, Sheffield, S8 2DG. 0114 201 4265. [www.hazards.org](http://www.hazards.org)



# Legal Beagle

## Don't run out of time

**FBU**  
**FREEPHONE**  
**LEGAL ADVICE**  
**LINE**  
**0808**  
**100 6061**

**Q What are the timescales for lodging an employment tribunal (ET) claim? Do applicants have to exhaust brigade complaints procedures before lodging an ET claim?**

**A** The timescale for lodging an ET claim is usually three months less one day. So a claim arising out of an incident on 1 June would need to be submitted by 31 August. A claim arising out of an incident on 31 March would need to be submitted by 29 June. There are a few cases where the time limit is six months (equal pay, or a statutory redundancy payment, for example). But it is best to work on a time limit of three months and that way you are unlikely to go wrong.

There is no longer a requirement to go through the grievance procedure before you submit a claim. A failure to go through the grievance procedure may however result in your compensation being reduced by up to 25%.

If you have an issue at work, the first thing to do is to speak to your union representative. Try to resolve matters informally if at all possible. You then have the option of taking out a grievance, following advice from the FBU, if an informal resolution is not possible. If the ET time limit is going to expire before the grievance has been heard, you must submit a claim form (ET1) before the time limit expires if you want the option of making an ET claim if the grievance procedure does not resolve your complaint.



**Q My brigade blamed me for an accident I had, saying that I had contravened health and safety regulations and so was responsible for what happened to me. Is it possible for me to claim compensation for my injuries?**

**A** Whether you can succeed in claiming compensation will depend on the circumstances of the accident and whether it is possible to show that your employer was in any way negligent in allowing the accident to happen.

This might include failing to carry out a proper risk assessment, or failing to ensure that equipment is properly used, maintained and

stored – and/or not ensuring that employees are properly trained in its use.

It may be that there should have been warning signs reminding employees of the correct safety procedures and regular refresher training.

It may be that a court would find that you contributed to your accident and reduce your compensation. This is called contributory negligence, but it does not mean that the employer is absolved from all blame.

The outcome of any claim for compensation depends on the individual facts of the case. Seek advice through the FBU legal service as soon as possible as there are strict deadlines for claiming compensation for personal injury.

**Q Do employers have the right to make deductions from the wages of employees?**

**A** The Employment Relations Act 1996 sets out that a worker has the right not to suffer unauthorised deductions from their wages.

The Act says that: "Where the total amount of wages paid on any occasion by an employer to a worker employed by him is less than the total amount of the wages properly payable by him to the worker on that occasion (after deductions), the amount of the deficiency shall be treated ... as a deduction made by the employer from the worker's wages on that occasion" S13(3) ERA 96.

So a deduction occurs when an employer pays less than the amount due on any given occasion and includes payments such as overtime, holiday pay, sick pay and maternity pay.

Deductions can only be made if they are authorised by a relevant provision in a worker's contract, by statutory provision or if the worker has agreed in writing to the deduction.

If an employee does suffer an unauthorised deduction then the statutory grievance procedure should apply.

It is also possible to ask an employment tribunal to decide if the deduction was unauthorised.

This must be done within three months of the date of the payment from which the deduction was made.

# “Inspiration can come from unexpected places”

**Stockton firefighter Ed Parrish sings and writes songs for pleasure and good causes**



## Music

Stockton acting watch manager Ed Parrish has been singing and writing songs for years. Now one of his compositions is poised to kickstart the career of another artist – and boost funds for Zoe’s Place, a local charity providing care and support for terminally ill children.

As *Firefighter* went to press, ten talented singers from the North East were preparing for an X Factor-style contest on Teesside to decide who wins a two-record deal complete with promotion.

The winner will record two of Ed’s songs including “The Journey” – a love song Ed wrote for his wife earlier in the decade. The other may not yet even have been written – Ed could choose to write a new song especially for the winner. If not, he has an

extensive back catalogue to draw on.

The contest, held at the Arc in Stockton at the end of March, was due to be judged by music business insiders and local celebrities and generated a lot of interest in the regional media.

Such exposure is gold dust for aspiring artists. A record deal, a good song and a PR push should leave the victor well placed for a career launch. Ed teamed up with Tony McDonough from Middlesbrough-based Manilla PR to devise and stage the ten-finalist, one recording deal contest.

## Working men’s clubs

Ed, 41, knows a lot about the business. He has performed at festivals over the past 20 years and is no stranger to recording his own material.

He cut his performing teeth in working

men’s clubs – hardly the cushiest or most forgiving of environments. He became adept at singing the covers the punters demanded – “anything from Motown to Level 42”. He didn’t sing any of his own compositions when working the clubs. “People want to hear what they’ve heard on the radio when they are out on a Friday night, which is fine,” says Ed.

In the past, he has played with various bands. But times change. “Nowadays, I tend to record everything on guitar and use backing tapes,” he says. And he’s very pleased with his latest version of “The Journey”, recorded with hotshot producer Steve Honest. “It’s a personal song, but different singers can make it their own,” says Ed with the true creative’s generosity of spirit.

Ed describes his work as “radio friendly





#### **ED PARRISH**

*Stockton acting watch manager Ed Parrish was a pig farmer and door-to-door salesman before becoming a firefighter – but he's always been a performer*

## **Ed Parrish cut his performing teeth in working men's clubs and became adept at singing the covers the punters demanded**

– popular without being pop”. But he was moved to write an edgy political song when the invasion and bombing of Iraq kicked off – prompted by Saddam Hussein’s possession of those elusive weapons of mass destruction.

Its title was “Happy Christmas Mr Blair” and Ed certainly wasn’t happy with Mr Blair taking Britain to war. They may share a title – but Ed’s song “The Journey” is certainly poles apart from Tony Blair’s autobiography – *A Journey*. “No-one wanted to touch the song when I put it out. Now a lot more people have come to believing that going into Iraq was not a good idea,” says Ed.

Ed had a varied career before joining the fire service at 27, working around his singing and song writing ambitions. “I’d been a pig farmer, dug roads, worked in

steel yards and scrap yards, sold door-to-door, at the same time as writing songs and performing.” It also provided a steady income for Ed, now a father and family guy.

#### **30 hopefuls**

More than 30 hopefuls turned out for auditions for the competition earlier in the year. Its final is the latest stage in Zoe’s Project, which aims to harness local talent to raise both funds and profile for a much-loved local charity.

Zoe’s Place in Middlesbrough is a “home from home” for babies and children up to five who have life limiting or terminal illnesses and complex needs, offering palliative and respite care. It receives very little government funding, relying on public generosity to raise the £1million a year it costs to provide vital support to

children and their families.

Fellow firefighters can hear “The Journey” on YouTube ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcDErP3Gels](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcDErP3Gels)) and even buy the single for 99p – all proceeds to Zoe’s Place.

Ed plans to carry on writing and recording his own songs and hopes “The Journey” will lead to a huge income boost for Zoe’s place as well as recognition for a new artist. If it also helps bolster Ed’s profile as a talented Teesside singer/songwriter then everyone’s a winner.

Ed finds inspiration for his songs in a variety of places – sometimes waking in the middle of the night to write down a key phrase.

Life on green watch at Stockton Bravo Two hasn’t yet featured. But then, when it comes to songwriting, inspiration can strike from unexpected places.

# Prize quiz



## Win two tickets to the 2011 Emirates Airline London Sevens rugby tournament at Twickenham in May

To win a pair of tickets please send your answers to the Prize Quiz by 30 April 2011 on a postcard to: Prize Competition (April 2011), FBU Head Office, Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT2 7AE. Please include your name, address and membership number. The winner will be selected at random from all correct entries.

**1** In what year was the first Rugby World Cup?

- A 1987
- B 1954
- C 1967
- D 1907

**2** Which country did David Campese play for?

- A New Zealand
- B Australia
- C Wales
- D Italy

**3** Which team won the 2010 Emirates Airline London Sevens?

- A Fiji
- B Australia
- C South Africa
- D France

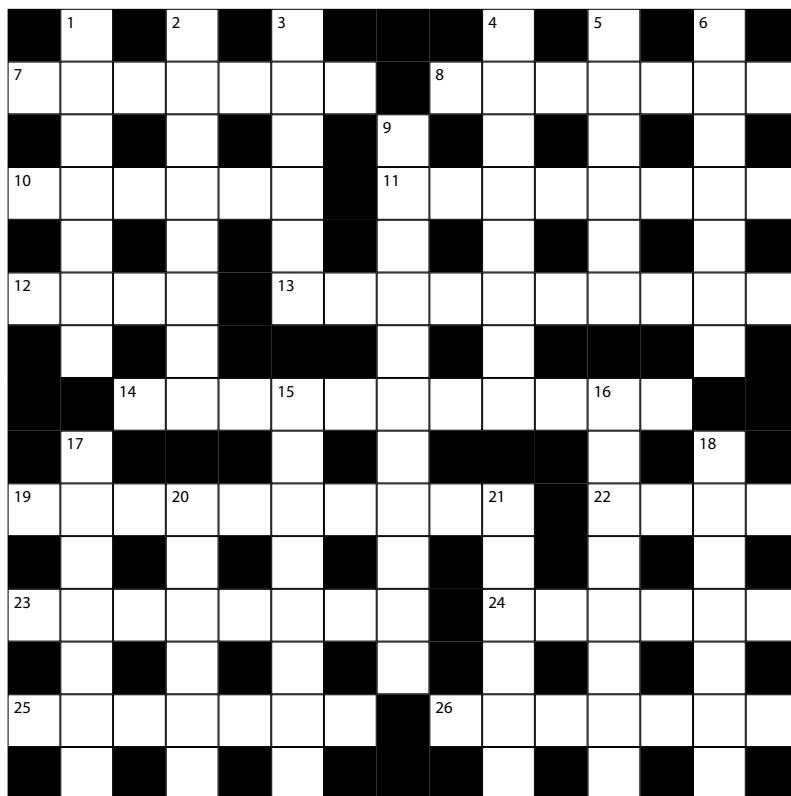


**4** Which country traditionally dances the haka prior to playing a rugby game?

- A South Africa
- B Australia
- C Scotland
- D New Zealand

**5** Which country beat England and their chance for a grand slam at the 2011 six nations championship?

- A France
- B Scotland
- C Ireland
- D Wales



## CROSSWORD

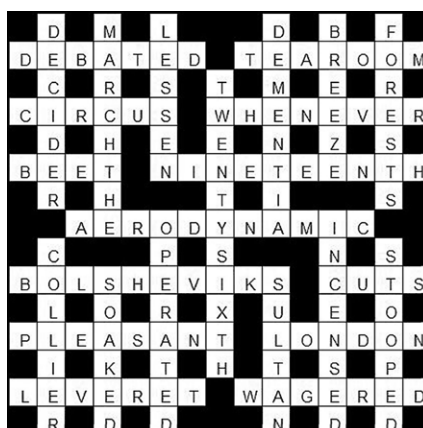
### ACROSS

- 7** One who bets (7)
- 8** Big foamy wave (7)
- 10** One-roomed flat (6)
- 11** Most recent FBU chair (4,4)
- 12** This bird is no more! (4)
- 13** 11 and 19, for example (10)
- 14** Amazing; gob-smacking (11)
- 19** Current FBU chair (4,6)
- 22** Broth, liquid-based dish (4)
- 23** Supporter of US political party (8)
- 24** Wrecked; made bankrupt (6)
- 25** Eels might be – in east London? (7)
- 26** Small rodent often kept as pet (7)

### DOWN

- 1** Legendary home of the knights of the round table (7)
- 2** The wages we get in retirement (8)
- 3** Tabloid newspaper (3-3)
- 4** Undrinkably salty (water) (8)
- 5** Bother; trouble – harass (6)
- 6** Removes from bottle (7)
- 9** Barriers (11)
- 15** Happened (8)
- 16** Least nice (8)
- 17** Train with beds (7)
- 18** Less noisy (7)
- 20** Thin wheaten strips, eaten in oriental 22s and other dishes (6)
- 21** Wisdom, Cook, Lamont – French? (6)

## Last month's answers and winners



### Crossword solution March

#### March quiz answers

- 1** A – 1789
- 2** B – 1917
- 3** C – 1959
- 4** B – 1791
- 5** C – Egypt

**Winner of the January/February quiz**  
Alan Durrant, Wales



# Station Cat

## Smallest service can still splash the cash



Money no object – unless it's for firefighters

### Small and silent

Station Cat is still waiting for the Warwickshire fire and rescue service press office to comment on the news that they appointed the new chief fire officer, Graeme Smith, on £120,000 a year, a £6,000 increase on the retiring CFO's pay. "Are you writing this in the context of the cuts?" asked a press officer wearily. I certainly am, replied the Cat: isn't the Warwickshire fire and rescue service talking about closing seven fire stations and taking away nine pumps? Wouldn't that make Warwickshire the smallest mainland fire and rescue service? "I'll get back to you," said the press officer, and didn't.

### Just a formality

It's called having your cake, eating it and then pretending it never existed. Susan Johnson became the first non-uniformed chief executive of the Durham and Darlington fire and rescue authority in May 2005. Previously the brigade had a chief fire officer. Of course the Cat understands why a fire authority wants to appoint a management type rather than a firefighter at the top. They may not know a lot about fires, but they know all there is to know about "Thinking Outside the Box and Pushing the Envelope", and, most of all, pretending they can do more with less. These skills are so valuable that Ms Johnson and three senior colleagues had pay rises of between 7.2% and 10.2% while firefighters were facing a pay freeze. But what we can't make

out is why, when she has all this valuable management wisdom, Ms Johnson should suddenly want to dress up like a firefighter. Apparently the authority has provided her with a uniform that she wears at formal occasions. The cost is unknown.

### Football crazy

Station Cat found herself on the platform at a Football Supporters Federation conference on policing of football matches. Afterwards the Cat chatted to football fans with horror stories to tell about the treatment meted out by some police forces to football fans – including firefighter (and FBU member) Tony Meyers of Bromley fire station. It's not in dispute that Tony's student son was handcuffed and thrown on the floor and a police dog was then "deployed" to attack him. He was bitten on the face and neck, spent eight days in hospital, and had 30 stitches. When the trial's over, we'll tell you exactly how he came by his injuries.

### Deep pockets

The Cat hates to add to the many troubles of AssetCo, the company that now owns and maintains all the fire appliances in London and in Lincolnshire. Actually, Station Cat hates to add to their troubles almost as much as she hates to lick her way through a very large saucer of cream. But we hear from our friend City Spy that, despite



plummeting share prices and a petition to wind the company up from the Inland Revenue over unpaid tax bills, AssetCo flew its guests by private jet to England's Six Nations rugby clash with Wales in Cardiff in February. An AssetCo spokesman told City Spy that chief executive John Shannon paid for the private jet out of his own pocket. If Mr Shannon makes enough money from his AssetCo shares to pay for private jets to Cardiff, maybe he could help the company pay its tax. Or at least fulfil its contract to maintain fire appliances – when 27 fire engines were returned to their fire stations last month, three of them were defective. They were fine when AssetCo took them.

### Easy come ...

London's government may soon have to struggle on without Brian Coleman. Labour thinks that come the May 2012 elections, it can oust him from his London Assembly seat of Barnet and Camden.

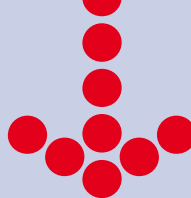
He's especially loathed in Barnet, where he's the man behind the escalating car parking charges, enforced so rapaciously that it's perfectly clear they are seen as a source of revenue. Coleman seems to think it's all rather funny – he told local newspapers that he "never knowingly under-charged". Not that the residents of the borough see any benefit from all that money he's taking from them. He's also one of the people behind the "Easy Council" – modelling council services on cut-price airlines.

### No question

And as if that isn't enough, Coleman in Barnet shows as much concern for free speech as he does in his role as chair of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA). Investigative journalist David Hencke revealed in a recent blog that Coleman's new proposals will take away many councillors' right to speak at future meetings unless the Tory Mayor, Anthony Finn, gives his permission. The idea is part of a plan to "streamline" debate and procedures by the ruling Tory group – and stop others complaining about cuts and parking charges. The proposal follows hard on the heels of Coleman's brainy wheeze to ban questions to the chair of the LFEPA, one Coleman, B. Find this and other good things at <http://davidhencke.wordpress.com>. Coleman's Facebook friend apparently told Hencke: "We do not talk to journalists or bloggers." Maybe they talk to firefighters.



# 25-year badges



**Dave Miller** (r) blue watch, Staines, receives his 25-year badge from Surrey north area rep Alan Geddes with blue watch looking on



**Pat O'Hanlon** (l) West Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from Bognor branch rep Andy Archer



**Foff Bishop** (r), West Sussex brigade secretary, receives his 25-year badge from regional treasurer Bill Woodfine



**Kevin Sharpe** (l) and Mark Marsden (r), East Sussex, receive their 25-year badges from Richard Hide



**Mick Parker** (r) white watch, Marine station, Middlesbrough, Cleveland, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Peter Whitecross



**Andy Waring** (r) red watch, Lincoln South, receives his 25-year badge from brigade fairness at work rep Garry Speed



**Stuart Downes** (r) receives his 25-year badge from West Midlands membership secretary Pardeep Raw



**Bob Bugg** (r) receives his 25-year badge from West Midlands membership secretary Pardeep Raw



**Martin Johnson** (r), Fire Service College, receives his 25-year badge from region 13 regional official Kevin Herniman



**Russ Ward** (l), Rugby, receives his 25-year badge from Warwickshire membership secretary Donny Clarke

## FBU regional offices

### REGION 1 Scotland

52 St Enoch Square, Glasgow,  
Scotland G1 4AA  
0141 221 2309, 01rs@fbu.org.uk

### REGION 2 Northern Ireland

14 Bachelors Walk, Lisburn,  
Co Antrim, BT28 1XJ  
02892 664622, 02rs@fbu.org

### REGION 3 Cleveland, Durham, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear

1 Carlton Court, 5th Avenue, Team Valley,  
Gateshead, NE11 0AZ  
0191 487 4142, 03rs@fbu.org.uk

### REGION 4 Yorks and Humberside

9 Marsh Street, Rothwell,  
Leeds, LS26 0AG  
0113 288 7000, 04rs@fbu.org.uk

### REGION 5 Greater Manchester, Lancs, Isle of Man, Cumbria, Merseyside, Cheshire

The Lighthouse, Lower Mersey St,  
Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH65 2AL  
0151 357 4400, 05rs@fbu.org.uk

### REGION 6 Derbys, Notts, Lincs, Leics, Northants

Little Dennis Street South (above  
Dawsons), Nottingham NG2 4EU  
0115 947 2042, 06gen@fbu.org.uk

### REGION 7 West Mids, Staffs, Warks, Hereford & Worcester, Salop

195/7 Halesowen Rd, Old Hill,  
West Midlands, B64 6HE  
01384 413633, 07rs@fbu.org.uk

### REGION 8 Mid and West Wales, North Wales, South Wales

4 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed,  
Bridgend, CF35 5LJ  
01656 867910, 08rs@fbu.org.uk

### REGION 9 Herts, Beds, Cambs, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk

28 Atlantic Square, Station Road,  
Witham, Essex, CM8 2TL  
01376 521521, 09rs@fbu.org.uk

### REGION 10 London

John Horner Mews, Frome Street,  
Islington, London, N1 8PB  
020 7359 3638, london@fbu.org.uk

### REGION 11 Kent, Surrey, Sussex

Unit 11, Hunns Mere Way,  
Woodingdean, Brighton, BN2 6AH  
01273 309762, 11rs@fbu.org.uk

### REGION 12 Bucks, Berks, Hants, Oxon, Isle of Wight

FBU Regional Office, The Merlin  
Centre, Unit L, Gatehouse Close,  
Aylesbury HP19 8DP  
01296 482297, 12rs@fbu.org.uk

### REGION 13 Cornwall, Devon and Somerset, Avon, Gloucs, Wilts, Dorset

158 Muller Road, Horfield,  
Bristol, BS7 9RE  
0117 935 5132, 13rs@fbu.org.uk

### Change of address or next of kin

Advise your Brigade Membership Secretary or any change of address and Head Office of changes to next of kin or nominations for benefits.

## FBU FREEPHONE LEGAL ADVICE LINE 0808 100 6061

The line provides advice for personal injury, family law, wills, conveyancing, personal finance and consumer issues.

For disciplinary and employment-related queries contact your local FBU representative.

Please send photographic prints or digital picture files to: Firefighter, FBU, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 7AE or firefighter@fbu.org.uk • Please include **full details** for every picture – full names of everyone who is in it; their station/brigade/watch etc; where they are in the picture (eg: left to right); their union posts/branch if relevant; and where and when it was taken.